

Application No.: 09/851,418**Docket No.: 4799-002****AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-5. (canceled)

6. (previously presented) A position-linked chat system, comprising a plurality of terminals connected to a server through a network, wherein said server includes:

a chat room control unit for generating a plurality of chat rooms based on a geographical standard;

a chat room selecting unit for selecting, among the generated chat rooms, a chat room in which a user at each terminal is to participate, based on information being transmitted from said terminal and relating to the current position of said terminal;

a sound control unit for mixing voices transmitted via the terminals of the users who participate in the same chat room; and

a future position estimating unit for estimating a future position of at least one of said terminals based on a change in the current position of said at least one terminal, wherein said chat room selecting unit selects, among the generated chat rooms, a chat room corresponding to the future position estimated by said future position estimating unit, as the chat room in which the user at said at least one terminal is to participate.

7-8. (canceled)

9. (previously presented) The position-linked chat system according to claim 24,

Application No.: 09/851,418**Docket No.: 4799-002**

wherein said sound control unit controls the volume of sound output from each terminal according to the distances calculated by said inter-terminal distance calculating unit.

10. (previously presented) The position-linked chat system according to claim 24, wherein when the distances calculated by said inter-terminal distance calculating unit are within a predetermined range, said sound control unit posts to the terminals within said range a message that the users at said terminals are close to each other.

11-13. (canceled)

14. (previously presented) A position-linked chat method of providing a chat service to users at a plurality of interconnected terminals, said method comprising the steps of:

generating a plurality of chat rooms based on a geographical standard;

selecting, among the generated chat rooms, a chat room in which a user at each terminal is to participate, based on information being posted from said terminal and relating to the current position of said terminal; and

mixing voices transmitted via the terminals of the users who participate in the same chat room;

wherein said selecting step comprising estimating a future position of at least one of said terminals based on a change in the current position of said at least one terminal, wherein a chat room corresponding to the estimated future position is selected, among the generated chat rooms, as the chat room in which the user at said at least one terminal is to participate.

15-17. (canceled)

18. (previously presented) A computer-readable medium recorded with a program for providing a chat service to users at a plurality of interconnected terminals, said program including

Application No.: 09/851,418**Docket No.: 4799-002**

sequences of instructions which, when executed by a processor, cause said processor to perform the steps of:

generating a plurality of chat rooms based on a geographical standard;

selecting, among the generated chat rooms, a chat room in which a user at each terminal is to participate, based on information being posted from said terminal and relating to the current position of said terminal; and

mixing voices transmitted via the terminals of the users who participate in the same chat room;

wherein said selecting step comprising estimating a future position of at least one of said terminals based on a change in the current position of said at least one terminal, wherein a chat room corresponding to the estimated future position is selected, among the generated chat rooms, as the chat room in which the user at said at least one terminal is to participate.

19-21. (canceled)

22. (previously presented) A computer program product including computer instructions on a server for providing a chat service to users at a plurality of terminals connected to said server through a network, the computer instructions including instructions for performing the steps of:

generating a plurality of chat rooms based on a geographical standard;

selecting, among the generated chat rooms, a chat room in which a user at each terminal is to participate, based on information being posted from said terminal and relating to the current position of said terminal; and

mixing voices transmitted via the terminals of the users who participate in the same chat room;

wherein said selecting step comprising estimating a future position of at least one of said terminals based on a change in the current position of said at least one terminal, wherein a chat

Application No.: 09/851,418**Docket No.: 4799-002**

room corresponding to the estimated future position is selected, among the generated chat rooms, as the chat room in which the user at said at least one terminal is to participate.

23. (canceled)

24. (previously presented) A position-linked chat system, comprising a plurality of terminals connected to a server through a network, wherein said server includes:

a chat room control unit for generating a plurality of chat rooms based on a geographical standard;

a chat room selecting unit for selecting, among the generated chat rooms, a chat room in which a user at each terminal is to participate, based on information being transmitted from said terminal and relating to the current position of said terminal;

a sound control unit for mixing voices transmitted via the terminals of the users who participate in the same chat room; and

an inter-terminal distance calculating unit which calculates distances between the terminals based on the current position of each terminal.

25-27. (canceled)

28. (currently amended) A position-linked chat method of providing a chat service to users at a plurality of interconnected terminals, said method comprising the steps of:

generating a plurality of chat rooms based on a geographical standard ;

iteratively obtaining the current position of each terminal based on information being transmitted from said terminal and relating to the current position of said terminal;

selecting, among the generated chat rooms, a chat room in which a user at each terminal is to participate, based on the iteratively obtained current position of said terminal;

mixing voices transmitted via the terminals of the users who participate in the same chat

Application No.: 09/851,418**Docket No.: 4799-002**

room; and

~~The method of claim 12, further comprising the step of~~ calculating distances between the terminals based on the current position of each terminal.

29. (previously presented) The method of claim 28, further comprising the step of controlling the volume of sound output from each terminal according to the distances calculated in said calculating step.

30. (previously presented) The method of claim 28, further comprising the step of informing, when the distances calculated in said calculating step are within a predetermined range, the users at the terminals within said range that they are close to each other.

31-32. (canceled)

33. (currently amended) A position-linked chat method of providing a chat service to users at a plurality of interconnected terminals, said method comprising the steps of:

generating a plurality of chat rooms based on a geographical standard;

iteratively obtaining the current position of each terminal based on information being transmitted from said terminal and relating to the current position of said terminal;

selecting, among the generated chat rooms, a chat room in which a user at each terminal is to participate, based on the iteratively obtained current position of said terminal;

mixing voices transmitted via the terminals of the users who participate in the same chat room; and

transferring a user from the chat room in which said user is currently participating to another chat room according to a change in the current position of the terminal of said user;

~~The method of claim 15,~~ wherein said transferring is performed without terminating the chat session of the user being transferred.

Application No.: 09/851,418**Docket No.: 4799-002**

34. **(currently amended)** A position-linked chat method of providing a chat service to users at a plurality of interconnected terminals, said method comprising the steps of:

generating a plurality of chat rooms based on a geographical standard;

iteratively obtaining the current position of each terminal based on information being transmitted from said terminal and relating to the current position of said terminal;

selecting, among the generated chat rooms, a chat room in which a user at each terminal is to participate, based on the iteratively obtained current position of said terminal;

mixing voices transmitted via the terminals of the users who participate in the same chat room; and

transferring a user from the chat room in which said user is currently participating to another chat room according to a change in the current position of the terminal of said user;

The method of claim 15, wherein said transferring is performed automatically unless the user to be transferred has chosen to stay in the current chat room.

35. **(currently amended)** A position-linked chat method of providing a chat service to users at a plurality of interconnected terminals, said method comprising the steps of:

generating a plurality of chat rooms based on a geographical standard;

iteratively obtaining the current position of each terminal based on information being transmitted from said terminal and relating to the current position of said terminal;

selecting, among the generated chat rooms, a chat room in which a user at each terminal is to participate, based on the iteratively obtained current position of said terminal;

mixing voices transmitted via the terminals of the users who participate in the same chat room;

transferring a user from the chat room in which said user is currently participating to another chat room according to a change in the current position of the terminal of said user; and

The method of claim 15, further comprising warning the user that the current chat room is about to change, wherein said transferring is performed automatically unless the user to be

Application No.: 09/851,418**Docket No.: 4799-002**

transferred has chosen to stay in the current chat room in response to said warning.

36. (previously presented) A server for use in a position-linked chat system in which said server communicates with a plurality of terminals through a network, the server comprising:

a chat room control unit for generating a plurality of chat rooms based on a geographical standard;

a chat room selecting unit for selecting, among the generated chat rooms, a chat room in which a user at each terminal is to participate, based on information being transmitted from the terminal and relating to the current position of the terminal;

a sound control unit for mixing voices transmitted via the terminals of the users who participate in the same chat room; and

a future position estimating unit for estimating future position of at least one of the terminals based on a change in the current position of said at least one terminal, wherein

the chat room selecting unit further selects, among the generated chat rooms, a chat room corresponding to the future position estimated by the future position estimating unit, as the chat room in which the user at said at least one terminal is to participate.